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SUBJECT: ETHIOPIA'S 2010 BFIF PROJECT PROPOSALS

REF: 09 STATE 126674

SUMMARY

1. (U) This cable is a reftel response detailing post's 2010 Business Facilitation Incentive Fund's (BFIF) two project proposals. Post requests BFIF funding in order to implement the following two projects: 1) Creating an AmCham Ethiopia quarterly business newsletter; and 2) Promoting the formal launch of the Embassy-supported Women's Entrepreneur Group (WEG) as it formalizes itself as a member of the international group Organization for Women in International Trade (OWIT).

PROPOSAL 1: AMCHAM QUARTERLY NEWS LETTER

2. (U) Justification: The one-year old American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) in Ethiopia is still in the nascent stages of development. AmCham currently has about 65 members, but seeks to attract additional membership and offer enhanced services to the U.S. and local business community. AmCham does not currently have the human or financial resources to generate publications. The AmCham Ethiopia quarterly newsletter would provide an excellent source of information about doing business in Ethiopia. The newsletter would be distributed electronically to AmCham members, government officials, local chambers of commerce, local business leaders, and media as well as be posted on both AmCham's and the U.S. Embassy's website. A newly hired research analyst would be responsible for the writing, editing, production, distribution and managing the advertisement revenues involved with the newsletter. This research analyst would work under the direct supervision of the AmCham General Manager.

3. (U) Expected Impact: The launching of this newsletter would boost AmCham's public profile, attract additional membership, and provide valuable information to its members and the overall business community. These outcomes clearly support Mission Ethiopia's Mission Strategic Plan (MSP) goal of growing a market-oriented economy. The newsletter's content would include promotion of AmCham Ethiopia services, information regarding past and future AmCham activities, "how to" guides on doing business in Ethiopia, highlighted sector analyses, and summaries of government reforms affecting business. For example, the newsletter will help explain Ethiopia's new and complex Public-Private Partnership bill and provide information on the potential impacts of Ethiopia's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO).

4. (U) Dates: A BFIF grant would fund the first two newsletters in 2010. AmCham would send out the first newsletter in March 2010 with an estimated circulation of 300 recipients. The second newsletter would be circulated in June 2010 with an estimated circulation of 700 recipients. Starting June 2010, the goal would be to have the publication finance itself through advertisement revenue. AmCham Ethiopia would work with an advertising agency to increase the number of advertisers and thereby increasing recognition of the publication. Planning milestones include:
--January 2010: interviewing and hiring a part time research

analyst; strategic planning for the AmCham business newsletter
--January-June 2010: develop newsletter distribution system;
writing, interviewing, data collection and analysis; sales of
advertising space
--February-March 2010: work with the graphic designer on layout and
style
--March and June 2010: editing and proofing; newsletter
distribution
--April 2010: evaluation and refining newsletter
--March and June 2010: newsletter satisfaction survey
--June 2010: project completion and final report

15. (U) Estimated Costs:

Salary (6 months) for part-time Research analyst	USD 2,000
Design and Production	1,500
Promotion of Newsletter	1,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	500
Total Estimated Cost:	USD 5,000

PROPOSAL 2: PROMOTION OF WOMEN'S ENTREPRENEUR GROUP LAUNCH

16. (U) Justification: State-owned enterprises and ruling party-owned entities dominate Ethiopia's economic landscape, leaving little room for the private sector to develop. Women entrepreneurs, who are historically disadvantaged in business experience and education, are forced to compete for the small slice of private business opportunities that do exist in the country. In response to these challenges, Charge d'Affaires Vicki Huddleston founded the informal Women's Entrepreneur Group (WEG) of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in June 2006. Ambassador Huddleston established the group as a way to bring together women entrepreneurs from small and medium growth-oriented businesses in efforts to build their capacity and create awareness about their products and services. The group members are diverse, with backgrounds in manufacturing, services, and art/handcrafts, including woven and leather goods, jewelry, and furniture. The WEG seeks to attain its goals through shared information of best practices of business management skills, high quality of raw materials and finished goods, and marketing and selling techniques.

17. (U) As WEG sought to formalize itself as an organization, Ethiopia drafted and passed an onerous Civil Society Organization (CSO) law. This law passed in early 2009. Since that time, the Ethiopian Government has focused on re-registering all non-governmental organizations under this law and delayed any registration of new organizations. New registrations are expected to be allowed in the early months of 2010. When registration is allowed, the WEG plans to register itself as a part of the international group Organization for Women in International Trade (OWIT) as the Addis Ababa chapter of OWIT. OWIT is an international organization which provides assistance in the form of networking, education and information sharing, and professional skills and leadership training. The OWIT has 24 chapters worldwide. The WEG currently has about 130 members, but seeks to increase its membership once it has a formal status. Embassy support for groups such as WEG/OWIT Addis Ababa falls in line with the MSP goal of growing a market-oriented economy.

18. (U) Expected Impact: Once WEG is allowed to formally launch as OWIT Addis Ababa, a launch ceremony will be organized. This BFIF project proposal would be in support of the media promotion of this launch event. The WEG plans to invite hundreds of business leaders, government officials, and other stakeholders to this event and seeks to publicize the event widely. The proposed funding for invitations, promotional flyers, and advertisements would be essential to making this event a success. The success of this launch event will allow this women's group to gain credibility, leverage resources, and increase the visibility of its members.

19. (U) Dates: This media blitz will be organized for the weeks leading up to the launch event. The event date is undetermined at this time, but will most likely take place in mid-2010.

10. (U) Estimated Costs:

Production of promotional materials (which will include developing logo, graphic design of promotional materials and printing--flyer, letter head, envelopes, rubber stamp, banners):

Graphic Design Work	USD 1,000
Printing	2,500

Media Coverage, to popularize the event/launch of OWIT Addis Ababa Chapter (which will include articles in newspapers, TV, and radio coverage):

Newspaper ad	USD 500
TV ad	600
Two radio ads (English/Amharic, 20 spots each)	400

Total Estimated Cost	USD 5,000
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11. Points of contact for both proposals:

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